In the Claims

The following is a marked-up version of the claims with the language that is underlined ("___") being added and the language that contains strikethrough ("——") being deleted:

1. (Currently Amended) A method <u>for</u> initiating an instant messaging (IM) session, the method comprising:

<u>receiving a rule for handling a received email message, the rule defining first criteria and second criteria, the rule further defining an action to be performed when both the first criteria and the second criteria are satisfied by the receiving email message, wherein the first criteria specifies that the received email message is from a given Internet domain and the second criteria specifies that the sender of the received email message is currently present at an instant messaging account;</u>

<u>determining whether the received email message is from the given Internet domain;</u>

determining whether ~~a~~ <u>the</u> sender of ~~a~~ <u>the</u> received email message is currently present at ~~an~~ <u>the</u> ~~Instant Messaging (IM)~~ <u>instant messaging</u> account;

determining whether the sender of the received email message is a contact of a recipient of the received email message; and

in response to determining that <u>the received email message is from the given Internet domain and</u> the sender of the received email message is currently present at the ~~IM~~ <u>instant messaging</u> account and in response to determining that the sender of the received email message is the contact of the recipient of the received email message, automatically launching an ~~IM~~ <u>instant messaging</u> session with the sender.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether a sender of a received email message is currently present at an ~~IM~~ <u>instant messaging</u> account includes extracting contact information from the email message, the contact information being associated with the sender of the received email message.

3-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium that includes a program that when executed by a computer performs at least the following:

<u>receiving a rule for handling a received email message, the rule defining first criteria and second criteria, the rule further defining an action to be performed when both the first criteria and the second criteria are satisfied by the receiving email message, wherein the first criteria specifies that the received email message is from a given Internet domain and the second criteria specifies that the sender of the received email message is currently present at an instant messaging account;</u>

<u>determining whether the received email message is from the given Internet domain;</u>

determining whether ~~a~~ <u>the</u> sender of ~~a~~ <u>the</u> received email message is currently present at ~~an~~ <u>the</u> ~~Instant Messaging (IM)~~ <u>instant messaging</u> account;

determining whether the sender of the received email message is a contact of a recipient of the received email message; and

in response to determining that <u>the received email message is from the given Internet domain and</u> the sender of the received email message is currently present at the ~~IM~~ <u>instant messaging</u> account and in response to determining that the sender of the received email message is the contact of the recipient of the received email message, automatically launching an ~~IM~~ <u>instant messaging</u> session with the sender.

11. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 10, the program further extracting contact information from the email message, the contact information being associated with the sender of the received email message.

12-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A system for initiating an instant messaging (IM) session, the system comprising:

means for receiving a rule for handling a received email message, the rule defining first criteria and second criteria, the rule further defining an action to be performed when both the first criteria and the second criteria are satisfied by the receiving email message, wherein the first criteria specifies that the received email message is from a given Internet domain and the second criteria specifies that the sender of the received email message is currently present at an instant messaging account;

means for determining whether the received email message is from the given Internet domain;

means for determining whether a ~~a~~ the sender of a ~~a~~ the received email message is currently present at an ~~an~~ the ~~Instant Messaging (IM)~~ instant messaging account;

means for determining whether the sender of the received email message is a contact of a recipient of the received email message; and

means for, in response to determining that the received email message is from the given Internet domain and the sender of the received email message is currently present at the ~~IM~~ instant messaging account and in response to determining that the sender of the received email message is the contact of the recipient of the received email message, automatically launching an ~~IM~~ instant messaging session with the sender.

19-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium for initiating an instant messaging (IM) session, the computer-readable medium including a program that when executed by a computer performs at least the following:

underline receiving a rule for handling a received email message, the rule defining first criteria and second criteria, the rule further defining an action to be performed when both the first criteria and the second criteria are satisfied by the receiving email message, wherein the first criteria specifies that the received email message is from a given Internet domain and the second criteria specifies that the sender of the received email message is currently present at an instant messaging account;

determining whether the received email message is from the given Internet domain;

determining whether ~~a~~ the sender of ~~a~~ the received email message is currently present at ~~an~~ the ~~Instant Messaging (IM)~~ instant messaging account; and

in response to determining that the received email message is from the given Internet domain and the sender of the email message is currently present at the ~~IM~~ instant messaging account, automatically, without user input, launching an ~~IM~~ instant messaging session with the sender.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 26, the program further extracting contact information from the email message, the contact information being associated with a sender of the email message.